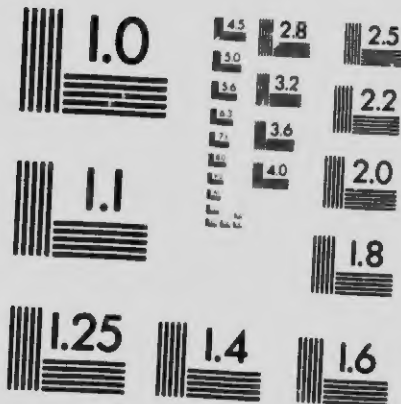


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SPEECH MADE BY  
MR. J. G. SCOTT,

General Manager of the Quebec & Lake St. John Railway, and of  
the Great Northern Railway of Canada,

At the Banquet given by the Citizens of Quebec to the

HONORABLE S. N. PARENT,  
MAYOR OF QUEBEC

*At the Chateau Frontenac on the 29th January, 1902.*

Mr. President,—

You have been good enough to associate my name with the toast of the Trade of the Port of Quebec, and to ask me to respond as representing the railroad interests of the city. I am sure you could easily have selected some one better qualified to speak on behalf of a branch of our trade so important and so necessary as railways are to the life and prosperity of any city. But if you will bear with me I shall endeavor to give a short summary of the railroad position of the city of Quebec and of its future requirements and possibilities in this vital question.

Prior to 1870 the city of Quebec was without railway communication of any kind. Our merchants up to that time had had the entire control of the lumber trade of the old Provinces of Canada, and that trade was so large and so profitable—as many as 1,600 ships have loaded in Quebec in one year to my recollection—that they gave no thought to other business and allowed other communities to become railway centres at the public expense.

But about 1870 they commenced to see that the lumber trade was beginning to slip away from them. The consumption of square timber, hitherto the great staple of Quebec trade, began to diminish in England, or rather to be replaced by the use of sawn lumber and dimension stuff. It became more and more profitable to saw this lumber at mills in the interior, and the railways made it possible to ship to Montreal, Portland and Boston what had formerly been shipped exclusively at Quebec. Some of our people then turned their attention to the idea of utilizing the spruce and hardwood forests north of Quebec, and this led to the construction of the first railway on the Quebec side of the river, the Quebec & Gosford—a wooden one—which proved a failure, and its promoters, headed by Sir Henri Joly de Lotbiniere, after working like heroes, lost all their money. But the seed they had sown was destined to produce marvellous results, which they had never dreamed of. The sight of the first locomotive on the streets of Quebec, streets so thronged with people as to become absolutely impos-

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ble, so that the Mayor of that day, standing on the pilot of the locomotive, was unable to clear a passage for the engine until night—the sight of this locomotive gave the people of Quebec the railroad fever. The fever culminated in a cry for the North Shore Railway and ended in the city voting a million dollars to that enterprise. The infection spread to Montreal, which voted Sir Hugh Allan a million for his road from Montreal to Ottawa, and finally took root in the Dominion Parliament, which at that historic session when Sir George Cartier cried "All aboard for the Pacific," voted to continue Sir Hugh Allan's road from Ottawa to the Pacific Ocean. I venture to say that the Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia never thinks—nay, I know he is too modest to think it, though it is true—that his work, his house to house canvass for subscriptions to the Gosford Railway, his generous contributions from his own pocket, were the foundation of that great enterprise, that glorious public work which has bound ocean to ocean and made Canada a united and prosperous nation, presenting to the world the spectacle of a new country raising last year a crop of one hundred million bushels of grain. But this is not all. The failure of the wooden road did not discourage those who had built it. They determined that it should be converted into iron and extended to Lake St. John. No easy task in those days. But at the head of the movement was a man to whom it was useless to say no. Throw him from the wall at one point, he would scale it at another. I refer to M. W. Baby, a far-seeing man and a lover of his country, who struggled for many years until he got the City of Quebec to vote \$450,000, the Provincial Government a land and money subsidy, and the Dominion a subsidy of \$3,200 per mile to the Quebec & Lake St. John Railway. There is a curious story in connection with the Dominion subsidy. The policy of

the Federal Government up to that time had been to refuse invariably any assistance of any kind to local railways. In a weak moment Mr. Alexander Mackenzie, then Premier at Ottawa, yielded to a pressure from New Brunswick and gave a local road there some second hand rails that had been thrown out by the Intercolonial. This was Baby's opportunity, and an agitation was raised throughout the Province, which resulted, in the succeeding Parliament, in a vote of \$3,200 per mile—the equivalent of the old rails—to the Lake St. John and other railways, and established the policy of a small Federal subsidy to local railways, a policy which has been productive of inestimable advantage to Canada, and has brought in an immense amount of foreign capital which has increased the railway mileage of Canada from 6,800 miles in 1890 to 17,600 miles in 1900.

A financial basis being thus secured, the work of construction was then pushed on by a company composed of Messrs. Ross, Renaud, Withall, Garneau, Beaudet, Thibaudeau, Caron and others, not forgetting H. J. Beemer, the energetic American contractor, to whom Quebec owes so much. After many struggles and sacrifices on the part of these gentlemen Lake St. John was reached, and to-day this railway is not only furnishing two-thirds of the lumber exported at Quebec, but by the rapid settlement of the beautiful country which it reaches, by the pulp mills and other industries which it has created, the employment given to the laboring classes, a back country is furnished to our city which is giving prosperity to our merchants and freight to the ships which visit our port. In addition to this a new route has been opened for pleasure travel which attracts annually to our city thousands of wealthy tourists.

But the good results of this courageous enterprise of a few men do not end here. The completion of the Lake St. John soon caused the ne-

cessity for a western extension, and again some of the same gentlemen, headed by one of the most enterprising men Quebec has had the good fortune to possess—I allude to the Hon. Pierre Garneau—well seconded by our worthy chairman, Mr. Chateauvert, took the load upon their shoulders and commenced the Great Northern Railway. (Mr. Garneau is prevented by illness from being with us to-night, otherwise he would be here, because he is always to the front when the interests of Quebec are involved, and if you want a proof of this, look at the Quebec Steamship Company, of which he is President, and has been a director since 1867, whose magnificent fleet of modern steamers has made the name of Quebec a household word in the port of New York and in the West Indies.) Again the Government came to the rescue with subsidies. An appeal was made by the Great Northern to the city of Quebec, which was responded to by a subscription of \$200,000, but only after much negotiation, owing to the careful watchfulness with which our worthy Mayor surrounds every expenditure from the municipal chest. During these negotiations we had succeeded in building nearly half the road, and as soon as the city had decided to subscribe we enlisted the help of some American capitalists, notably Colonel McNaught of New York and Mr. H. H. Melville, of Boston: who have worked so hard for, and become so interested in the prosperity of Quebec, that they are fully entitled to be considered as fellow-citizens. Well, the Great Northern is finished and in operation, and so is its million bushel elevator on the Louise Basin; the grain shipping trade of Quebec has made a good start, and it looks as if we were going to have for shipment at our port all the pulp, paper and other products of the industries at Grand Mere and Shawinigan, industries which have cost several millions of dollars, and which

would not exist to-day if it were not for the construction of the Great Northern.

I leave it to Mr. Melville, who is present, to explain to you more fully the work accomplished by the Great Northern, and the opinion which is entertained of it, and of the St. Lawrence route, and of our port, by financial men in the United States. But before doing so I would wish to bear tribute to the efforts of one who is no longer with us, the late Mr. Dobell, always a firm believer in the Great Northern, which he helped liberally. I well remember his argument before the City Council when the objection was raised that Quebec is closed to winter business. How he pointed out that the prosperous cities of Riga, Memel and Dantzic, in the Baltic, are in exactly the same position as Quebec and still do a splendid shipping trade because their railways stretch into the interior, and bring to them during the winter grain, lumber and other products to load their ships in the spring. Mr. Dobell's place in this community will not readily be filled.

Eight railways now converge at Quebec on opposite sides of the St. Lawrence. The greatest impediment to their usefulness is the want of communication between them. That objection is now being removed by the rapid progress being made in the construction of the bridge which will be one of the engineering wonders of the world, having a single span ninety feet longer than the celebrated bridge over the Firth of Forth. When this bridge is finished, the grain, lumber and other products of the west and north can reach a market in the south or in the winter time a seaport for shipment. And all the roads on the south side will come into Quebec, and amongst them, we hope, the New York Central. And when I speak of the New York Central, their welcome advent amongst us would seem likely to be more certain than we had sup-

posed, if we may judge from to-day's newspaper reports. And in this connection I would ask you, Mr. Chairman, could anything be more significant more auspicious, for the future of Quebec than the fact that the greatest railway in America, and the greatest owner of upper lake tonnage are at the same moment seeking entry to our port? The completion of this great work of the St. Lawrence bridge will transform our good old city, and we owe it entirely to our worthy guest of this evening, the Mayor of Quebec.

Such is the present position of the railway interests of the city of Quebec for which you have been good enough to ask me to speak. They have all been created during the last thirty years, and have involved the expenditure of an immense sum of money. Even the Lake St. John and Great Northern, with the humble beginnings I have described, have cost over nine millions of dollars, and yet during their construction not a laboring man has ever lost a dollar, and these roads have been built practically without litigation of any kind. These results are largely due to the cordial co-operation of citizens of both nationalities, and to that good feeling between French and English which I am happy to say exists in so marked a degree in the Ancient Capital.

Such is a brief description of what has been done by the people of this city towards shaping the railway policy of Canada, since they awoke from the lethargy of the lumber trade, thirty years ago. They began late, but it seems to me that, all things considered, the men of this historic old city have not been altogether unworthy of their predecessors, who centuries ago, discovered and showed the road to the Mississippi, to Louisiana, to the Red River, the Mackenzie, and even to the distant shores of Hudson's Bay.

Surely this little history, which to

me seems so wonderful, should teach us to see not only that we should not despise small beginnings, but that with unity of purpose, with respect for the rights and feelings of others, in other words, by all elements of our population working hand in hand, as we have done in the past, it will be possible for our commercial community to accomplish much in the future; for much remains still to be done before Quebec takes her rightful place amongst the great seaports of the world.

And now—as to the future—

Away to the northwestward of Quebec beyond the height of land and south of James Bay stretches a vast country, recently acquired by the Province of Quebec from the Dominion Parliament. This territory contains an area of 70,000 square miles, or equal in extent to England. It has been commonly supposed that being adjacent to Hudson's Bay—the name of which makes one shiver—the climate would make this country of little value. But there could be no greater mistake. There is an observatory at Moose Factory, on James Bay, and the result of five years' observations proves that the average summer temperature there is three degrees warmer than Rimouski on the St. Lawrence, and somewhat warmer than the Lake St. John district, and that the snow-fall is half that of Montreal. So that from a climatic point of view anything that can be grown at Lake St. John, Quebec or Winnipeg, can be grown in the James Bay district. The Missionaries of New France in the old times, to whom work Parkman pays so just a tribute, knew this better than we do to-day. For Pere Albanel, whose route we are seeking to follow, said two hundred years ago that he found the wild roses in bloom at James Bay as early as he had seen them at Quebec. Engineers and surveyors have been through this new country in every

direction. They all agree that the country is level and well timbered, especially in spruce, so valuable now for pulp and paper and abounding in splendid water powers, the soil good, and the indications of minerals very promising. Our energetic fellow-citizen, Mr. Henry O'Sullivan, C.E., director of Provincial Surveys, who has been three times through this country, is enthusiastic about it, and, to prove the excellence of the climate, took a swim in James Bay in October. There can be no doubt that there is there an enormous field for agriculture for mining and for the manufacture of pulp and paper. Who will obtain control of this great territory? We who hold the seaports by which its products should be exported, or the Province of Ontario which is so alive to its value that the Provincial Government is now about to build as a public work, the first section of a railway from Lake Nipissing towards James Bay? Fortunate we have three important factors in our favor. In the first place it is common sense that this new territory should have its outlet to a seaport. Secondly, nature lends itself to the location of a railway from Lake St. John to James Bay, because a natural route can be had up the valley of the Ashuapmouchouan River which flows into Lake St. John and down the valley of the immense Nottoway River which flows into James Bay. This line will be level and straight, and will pass through the very centre of the territory which belongs to the Province of Quebec. Thirdly, the Dominion Government, thanks to the energy of our representatives, have recognized the merits of our claim by voting a handsome subsidy from Lake St. John towards James Bay, so that there should be a good chance of this territory becoming tributary to the city of Quebec.

But this is not all. A glance at the map will show you that this line

from Lake St. John to James Bay, if prolonged to Port Simpson, on the Pacific coast, will form the shortest possible line from ocean to ocean, passing through a country suitable for agriculture for the entire distance from Lake St. John to the Rocky Mountains, through the centre of the fertile Per River valley, and so direct that it will be 300 miles shorter from ocean to ocean than the Canadian Pacific, 600 miles shorter than Mackenzie & Mann's projected line, and 720 miles shorter to Japan and China than the Canadian Pacific, and yet so far north of the latter that instead of injuring its traffic, it must do it good by settling up the zone of agricultural country between the two lines.

You will, no doubt, think this a very ambitious scheme. It has that appearance. But it is not visionary. It has geography on its side, and Quebec happens to be so situated geographically that sooner or later it must become the eastern terminus, with the Saguenay perhaps sharing in the overflow of the traffic, of the shortest possible transcontinental line. The wheat belt of western Canada stretches from latitude 49 to latitude 55, and in the west as far as latitude 60, an average width of over 300 miles. The farmer has scarcely touched this wheat belt, and yet we have such a crop that the C.P.R. is to-day arranging for an immense amount of capital to double track the road and increase its equipment. And the financial position of the C.P.R. is so excellent that this additional capital is to be raised not by additional mortgages, but by increasing the issue of common stock—it is to be presumed at not less than par—a financial feat almost without precedent in the history of railways in America. Does not this prove the necessity of another road or perhaps two? And if so, why should we drag grain grown in latitude 50 or 55, and intended to be

shipped to Liverpool, which is 300 miles further north than Quebec, down to the port of New York in latitude 40 for shipment, as we are doing to-day, when the shortest possible route to the sea will bring it to the port of Quebec in latitude 47? Moreover this is not a new project. It was advocated before Quebec people twenty years ago by General Hewson, an eminent American engineer. Marcus Smith, one of the most eminent of Canadian engineers, also, if I am not mistaken, approved of this route. And the late Senator James Gibb Ross, of Quebec, was a strong advocate of a railway to James Bay. Further than this I may say that there is a Dominion charter for this transcontinental line, and that it is controlled by Quebec and London people.

I think, Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen, that by this time you will be sorry that you called upon me to respond to this toast. I fear that I have imposed upon your patience and your good nature. But the prosperity of our city is bound up in the question of railroad facilities. We have a great country, full of undeveloped wealth and resources. We are only living as it were, on the fringe of it. Our efforts in building the Canadian Pacific have resulted in a marvellous financial success, so that what seems to-day visionary and al-

most impossible of accomplishment will probably, in the course of a few years, through the increase in the wealth of the country, through the discoveries of minerals, through the increasing demand for water powers and for pulp and paper, become comparatively easy work, and all the more so if we now have confidence in ourselves and make a beginning, first making sure that we are on the right track.

When this comes to pass, Quebec will become, as Nature intended her to be, and as Frontenac predicted more than two hundred years ago, the shipping port of half the continent.

But even to-day we have made great strides towards that end. In a few months we shall see the trains of the Grand Trunk, the Intercolonial, the Quebec Central and the New York Central crossing the bridge and bringing the traffic of the south and the east to our harbor. We shall see the Lake St. John, the Great Northern, the C. P. R. and the Montmorency railways bringing increasing business for our shipping. We shall see additional lines of ocean steamers making Quebec their terminus, and perhaps, the Fast Atlantic Service. And when that prosperous time comes I hope we shall not forget how much we are indebted for it to our guests of this evening—our worthy Mayor.



